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people on those matters which public opinion is competent to decide; and a willingness to leave to "the specialist matters which can only be decided by the specialist."

The reader who is neither reactionary nor radical will probably find himself in agreement with almost all the judgments that the author passes upon the political events, institutions, and developments which he discusses in this volume. But the chief value of the book is as a historical summary. It probably contains more vital and timely political history than any other American volume of the same size. The discriminating reader who has hitherto been unaware of the part played by the economic factor in our political existence and development, will discover with something of a shock that the historical works upon which he has been educated have been rather defective. Whether or not we subscribe to Professor Becker's prophecy, that "American history will shortly be rewritten along economic lines," we may be assured that the economic factor will receive much more attention than it has received. "Undercurrents in American Politics," will probably exercise considerable influence in promoting this movement.

History of Poor Relief Legislation in Iowa. By John L. Gillin, State Historical Society, Iowa City, 1914. Iowa Social History Series. Pp. 404.

This volume of Dr. Gillin presents an historical study of legislation for the relief of the poor in Iowa. The first part contains a general historical account of legislation in the territory which later became Iowa. It covers the period from 1838 to 1914. The second part takes up special phases of poor relief legislation. The third part contains the history of the care of special classes of dependents. In the concluding section, the author gives a summary of the present system of poor relief in the state and makes suggestions as to desirable changes.

Dr. Gillin's work is an admirable piece of historical writing. Care in tracing origins and skill in seizing essential ideas and in accounting for early forms, are displayed throughout the volume. The process of development of the spirit and institutions of relief and the evolution of laws affecting it are traced with a peculiar and effective simplicity. The value of the exposition is greatly enhanced by apt comparisons between present and past stages of the development of relief legislation in the state and elsewhere. Throughout the work, the reader finds very helpful interpretations of particular features of legislation in the light of the larger movement of social sympathy and the ideals of practical

statesmanship. The author's treatment shows great common sense in toning down idealism without destroying it, and in setting forth with admirable reserve the reforms that are to be desired.

No classified bibliography accompanies the work, but there are forty pages of notes and references to sources. An examination of these shows that the exposition is based throughout on original sources; statutes and laws, constitutions, legislative journals, messages of governors, newspapers, proceedings of Iowa and other State Conferences of Charities and Correction, collections of legislative documents, reports of state institutions and of the Board of Control, authoritative works on special features of relief legislation. The nature of the author's sources and the skill displayed in handling and interpreting them, give the volume a first-rate value.

Dr. Gillin finds that the code adopted in 1851 has been paramount in the history of relief legislation in Iowa. Hence, he presents in an appendix, an exhaustive analysis of the code and traces each section of it which relates to poor relief to the sources from which it was derived. In this manner, he lays Iowa under tribute to Wisconsin, Michigan, the Northwest Territory, Pennsylvania, Ohio and New York.

The work brings out in an interesting way, the adverse effect of party politics in hindering the development of serious attention to relief problems in the legislature. The short-sighted haphazard method that marked earlier treatment of the problems was succeeded by a dawning sense of community responsibility when the Civil War forced upon the State the care of dependents of soldiers who had given their lives to their country in time of need. This wider vision seems to have remained. Beginning with the late nineties, a marked increase in social legislation occurs, whose aim it is largely to prevent poverty. This latter spirit is due as the author well remarks, to a growing realization "that poverty and pauperism are not isolated problems, but on the contrary, that they are interwoven with all kinds of other social problems such as vice, crime, housing, inadequate health regulation, neglected children, industrial neglect, lack of a workman's compensation act and a number of other unfortunate social conditions." The author advocates radical changes in the management of county poorhouses, supervision of mothers' pensions by a state expert under the State Board of Control and the placing of all county poorhouses under the State Board of Control.

Readers of Dr. Gillin's volume will find helpful a collective summary of the present relief laws of Iowa in "The Summary of State Laws Relating to Dependent Classes," issued by the Census Bureau in 1913.

Dr. Gillin is now a professor of Sociology in the University of Wis-

consin. At the time that the work was written, he was a member of the faculty of the State University of Iowa. His thorough acquaintance with conditions in the state is manifest. The volume may be commended most highly to all students of relief legislation.

Social Legislation in Iowa. By John E. Briggs. State Historical Society, 1915. Pp. xii + 444.

This volume contains a succinct account of social legislation in Iowa including statutes passed in the year 1913. After a short chapter in which the author offers a definition of social legislation, he gives a brief history of social legislation in general. His exposition is organized about the codes of 1851, 1873 and 1897. The second part of the treatise covers legislation since the last named year.

The author finds it necessary to place more or less arbitrary limits to the field which he covers. He includes legislation affecting particular classes, dependents, defectives and delinquents; pensioners and laborers; public health, public safety, public morals and domestic relations. The author is happy in avoiding highly technical phrases and in giving to his reader the substance rather than the text of laws. He tells us that "The work is chiefly a statement of the contents of laws without their legal verbiage; it is not an effort to account for cause, effect or value." This permits a feeling of continuity in the reading of the work and it imparts a certain liveliness to the narrative which is too frequently missing in volumes of this kind. As a piece of descriptive work, it is in the highest degree satisfactory. The copious notes and references found in the work serve as a guide in a wide range of reading in every type of source. An excellent index adds very greatly to the usefulness of the volume.

The reader discovers after going through the volume that Iowa is well along in the modern movement which is marked by an awakened social conscience and increasing solicitude on the part of the state for the welfare of the weaker classes. Among the interesting discoveries that one makes is that Iowa forbids ball games, horse races, and other sports or entertainments that would desecrate Memorial Day, before three o'clock in the afternoon. One finds also that principals of County High Schools may prohibit the use of tobacco in any form by any student under their jurisdiction. The School Board is given the same control over pupils in the grade schools. One finds also that the law forbids secret societies and fraternities in the public schools. Furthermore, "It is a misdemeanor for any one outside of the school to solicit